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Monday, November 27, 2017 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly

CYBER MONDAY

Experts share tips on how to shop for deals. 18-19

Burn those holiday calories. 20

Solving the hunger problem in our schools. 21

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The Eagles demolished the Bears to earn their 10th win of the season. 22, 24

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WELCOME TO METRO PHILLY

SAM NEWHOUSE, REPORTER

Is it a tradition or torture? Nothing gets people as fired up as horse-drawn carriage tours, which some animal lovers say are cruel, while others think horses are meant to work and preserve a historic Philadelphia tradition. Now, one local horse-carriage company is facing criticism after its stables were cited for animal welfare violations. Read it all inside and at **metrophilly.us.**

FIGHT OVER US CONSUMER FINANCE AGENCY

1 The White House's plan to appoint an interim leader for the top U.S. regulator for consumer finance came under further scrutiny on Sunday as a senior Democratic senator said the move would violate the Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform law. Richard Cordray, a Democrat, stepped down on Friday as director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which was created after the financial crisis to protect consumers from abusive lending practices. He named Leandra English, the agency's chief of staff, as deputy director and said she would take over as acting director. President Donald Trump then named White House budget director Mick Mulvaney, one of the CFPB's fiercest critics, to the position. On Saturday, the Justice Department said in a memo that the White House was right to name an interim CFPB director.

WEEKEND ONLINE SALES CLIMB TO RECORD HIGH

2 Black Friday and Thanksgiving online sales in the United States surged to record highs as shoppers bagged deep discounts and bought more on their mobile devices, heralding a promising start to the key holiday season, according to retail analytics firms. U.S. retailers raked in a record $7.9 billion in online sales on Black Friday and Thanksgiving, up 17.9 percent from a year ago, according to Adobe Analytics, which measures transactions at the largest 100 U.S. web retailers. Adobe said Cyber Monday is expected to drive $6.6 billion in internet sales, which would make it the largest U.S. online shopping day in history. In the run-up to the holiday weekend, traditional retailers invested heavily in improving their websites and bulking up delivery options, preempting a decline in visits to brick-and-mortar stores.

EAGLES ROLL

3 Eagles wide receiver Nelson Agholor flips into the end zone past Eddie Jackson of the Chicago Bears to score a touchdown in the second quarter at Lincoln Financial Field on Sunday.

GETTY IMAGES

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

ISIS RAISES STAKES WITH EGYPT MOSQUE ATTACK

4 The mosque was packed with hundreds of worshippers for Friday prayers in Egypt's North Sinai when gunmen in military-style uniforms and masks appeared in a doorway and at windows. The ease with which they mounted an attack — killing more than 300 people in the worst bloodshed of its kind in Egypt's modern history — highlighted the threat militant groups pose in the most populous Arab country. After four years of battling Islamic State in the Sinai, where the group has killed hundreds of soldiers and police,authorities still face an enemy with growing ambitions in Egypt, despite its defeats in Iraq, Syria and Libya. Carrying the black flag of Islamic State, the assailants arrived in off-road vehicles before opening fire on the cream-colored Al Rawdah mosque in Bir al-Abed, leaving its carpets stained with blood, officials and witnesses said.

CUBA HOLDS MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

5 Cuba took another step on Sunday toward the end of the Castro era, with millions of residents placing paper ballots in cardboard boxes for ward delegates to municipal assemblies. The vote comes the day after the first anniversary of revolutionary leader Fidel Castro's death and precedes another election early next year for provincial and national assembly deputies. The new national assembly, where 50 percent of the deputies must be ward delegates elected on Sunday, is expected on Feb. 24 to select a new president to replace Raul Castro, Fidel's 86-year-old younger brother, who has said he will step down after serving two five-year terms. The Castro brothers have headed the government since the 1959 revolution. Raul Castro will remain head of the Communist Party until 2021, the only legal party in Cuba.

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Meek Mill gives Thanksgiving turkeys away from prison

The recently re-imprisoned rapper is still helping the community as he fights for freedom.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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As Philly rapper Meek Mill's recent re-imprisonment continues to draw attention and criticism from criminal justice activists, Meek remains focused on doing good at home.

Representatives of the rapper, currently incarcerated at a state prison in Chester, held his annual "DreamChasers Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway" last Wednesday, despite the fact that Meek is currently locked up, facing a two- to four-year sentence on probation violations.

The giveaway was announced on social media by Meek's team, with giveaway points around the city, including in Point Breeze, West Philly, Strawberry Mansion and North Philly.

Meek has held the Thanksgiving turkey giveaway for five years running, starting in 2013 with 200 turkeys given away in South Philly. This year they're hoping to give away 1,000 frozen birds.

Each bird came with a card from Meek addressed to "My Philly fam."

"I am thankful for you and for all your support during this time. I wish you a safe and belssed Thanksgiving," the card said.

As celeb gossi site TMZ put it, "Meek ain't free, but his turkeys are. Happy Thanksgiving!"

Meanwhile, updates keep coming about the rapper's controversial re-imprisonment on violations of probation stemming from a 2008 gun possession case.

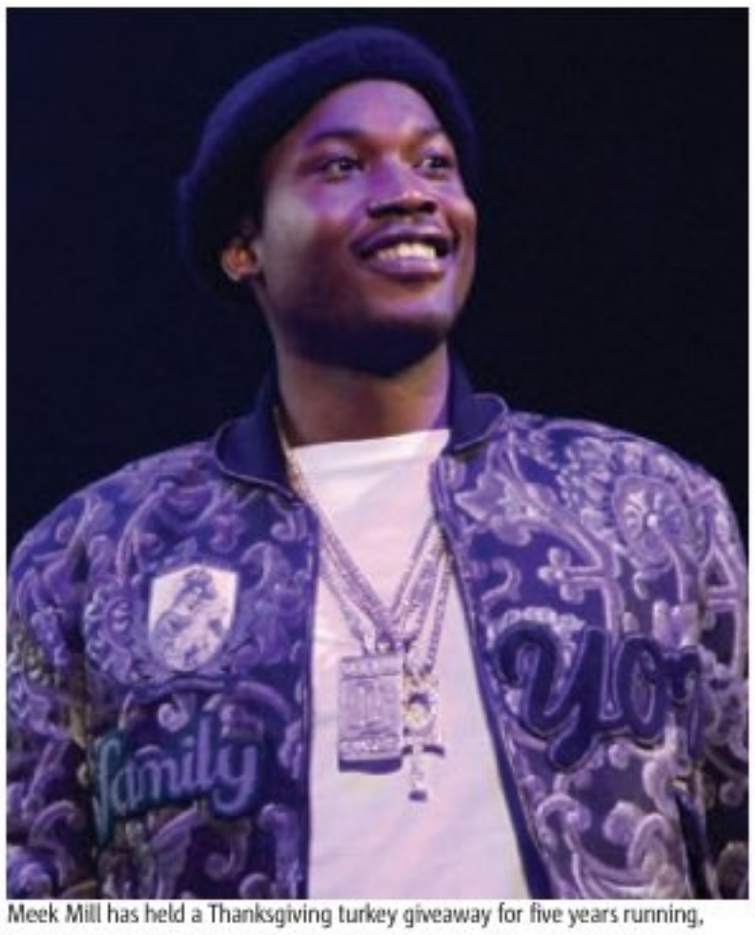
Meek got two to four years from Judge Genece Brinkley, against the recommendations of his probation officer and the prosecutor handling the case. She ruled that he violated his probation for three incidents: being arrested for riding a dirtbike, an arrest after a scuffle with over-aggressive fans in the St. Louis airport (both of those charges were later dropped) and testing positive for Percocet.

According to TMZ, Meek's defense team is planning to mention Judge Genece Brinkley's brief career as an actress in the ongoing fight, to argue that she is "jealous" of Meek's fame.

It turns out the Court of Common Pleas judge had a brief but memorable stint in 1993's "Tell My Mom I Love Her," as the mother of the title who can be seen dramatically grieving for her shot son in one scene that is now on Youtube.

They have previously argued in court papers that Brinkley holds enmity with Meek for not ditching Jay-Z's talent management company Roc Nation to sign with Philly-based entrepreneur Charlie Mack, and for refusing her request to cover a Boyz II Men song.

Currently unsigned NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick also recently spoke with Meek in prison and reported that the rapper is "in good spirits."



Meek Mill has held a Thanksgiving turkey giveaway for five years running, GETTY IMAGES

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Philly carriage-horse company's future in question

Carriage-ride company weighing options after horse stables found with numerous building code and animal welfare violations.

SAM NEWHOUSE
@scnewhouse
sam.newhouse@metro.us

Clop. Clop. Clop.

The sound of horse hooves trotting around Independence Mall may evoke fond memories of childhood carriage-tours in some, or thoughts of Old City's centuries of history for others.

But in 2017, some horse lovers say it means exploitation.

Caught in the crossfire is the Philadelphia Carriage Company (PCC), whose 100-year-old stables, where eight horses are typically kept at a time, have come under scrutiny from neighbors in the Callowhill/Spring Garden area, the city's Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I), and horse lovers like Janet White.

"I think of myself as an average working-class Philadelphian, a concerned citizen who's become aware of the suffering the carriage horses experience on a daily basis, both working on the streets and 'existing' in dilapidated stables," said White, founder of the Carriage Horse Freedom group.

Earlier this year, White documented decrepit conditions at PCC's stables and shared photos with the city. After inspections over the summer, PCC was cited for multiple code violations. (The city's other horse-drawn tour company, 76 Carriage Tours, passed its inspection.)

Records show PCC's stables were cited for stalls too small for horses to turn around or lie down during their off-hours; three of the horses being too sick to work; and one horse stained with their own manure and urine.

White said these conditions constitute "cruelty." Philly's animal welfare organizations have not made any such accusations, but a city official confirmed that "animal welfare violations" were found at the stables, which could mean the full revocation of PCC's license to operate.

Erin Connelly of Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages Philly at Independence Mall in July 2017. RANDI FAIR

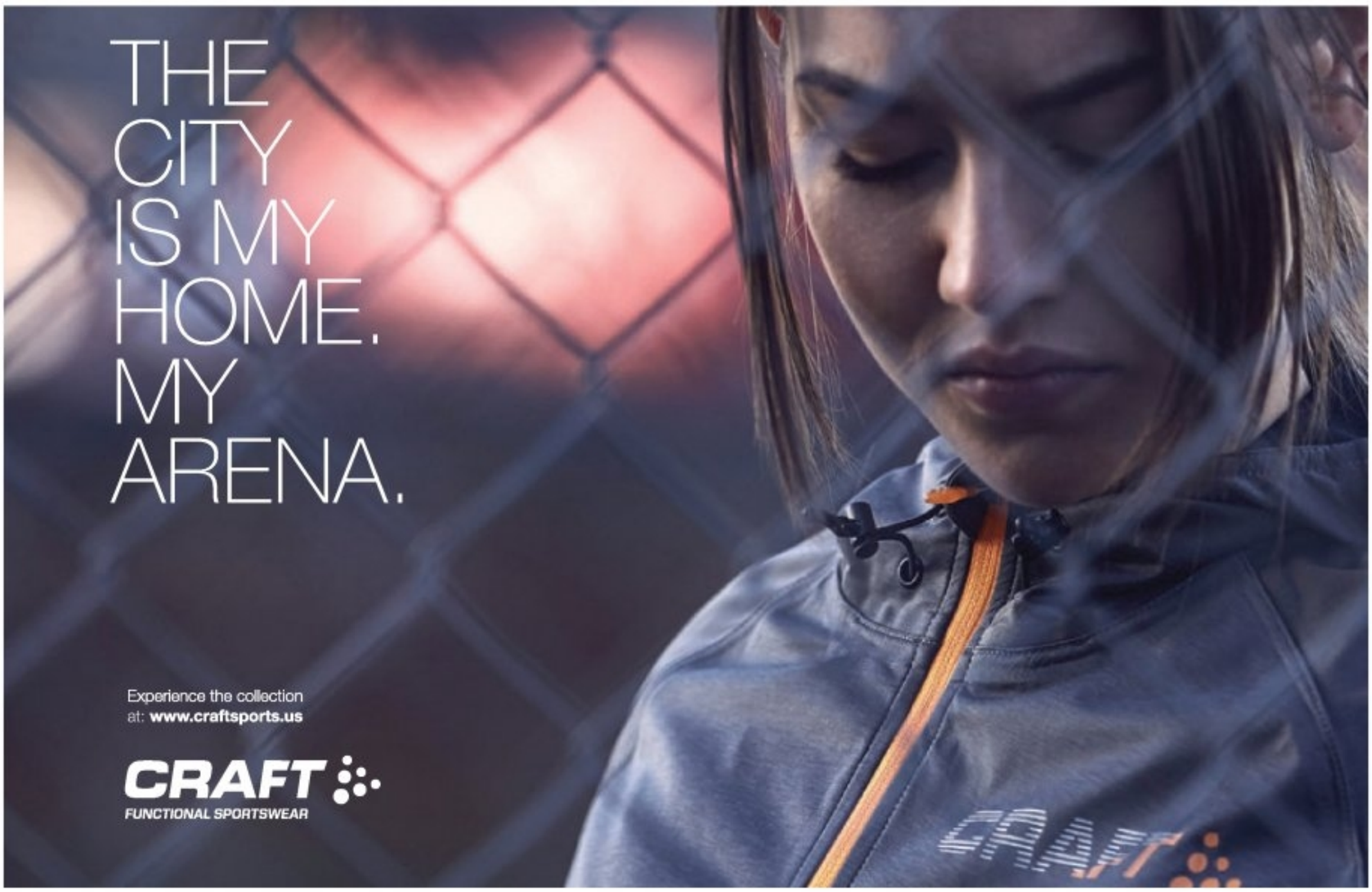
PCC owner Han Yee Hoo's lawyer, Barry Penn, denied the company is in any way cruel to its horses. He said they plan to appeal L&I's findings, which were upheld at an administrative hearing on Nov. 7. But Penn acknowledged Hoo, who bought the stables with her late husband in 1979, is weighing options including possibly selling the building.

"The horses are well taken care of. Nobody mistreats those horses. ... They get rotated and get put out to pasture in Lancaster County," he said. "These are all technical, structural violations, such as the size of the stall. ... Most of those things cannot be corrected because physically, there's not the space to add more stalls."

City Councilman Mark Squilla praised Hoo for attempting to rectify some of the violations that L&I discovered, but agreed that the building is likely too aged to continue serving as stables.

Erin Connelly, who leads "Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages Philly," a group known for their silent protests of all carriage-drawn horse tours at Independence Mall, said victory would only come when "the doors shut and the horses are transported to a sanctuary."

"These horses deserve better," Connelly said. "They deserve to be on a farm like other horses and not on streets with motor vehicles, breathing in toxic fumes, and working in extreme weather conditions."



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Feeling aggressive or a little emotional? Blame it on the alcohol

Study shows that red wine makes us feel relaxed, while spirits can make us aggressive or excessively confident.

MEAGAN MORRIS
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

Alcohol can have an immediate impact on our physical health — you know, "beer before liquor, never been sicker" — but what about our emotions?

Sure, we all have that friend who gets way too chatty after a few drinks, but do those emotions depend differ on the types of alcohol we drink? Yes, according to a new study from the Public Health Wales NHS Trust.

For the study, published in the journal BMJ Open, the conducted an online survey of anonymous people between 18 and 34 years old from 21 different countries who had consumed alcohol in the previous year. The questions focused on the type of alcohol the respondents imbibed in during that time.

The results? Most people — about 53 percent — said that kicking back with a glass of red wine or a few beers helped them feel relaxed.

Just over 59 percent of those surveyed said they felt most confident after drinking spirits, followed by energy (at 58 percent) and sexiness (just over 42 percent). However, those same spirits were more likely to cause feelings of sadness, aggression and illness.

Overall, women were more likely to feel emotional while drinking, while men landed more on the aggressive end.

Where you drink can influence emotions, too.

Taking a shot of vodka or sipping a glass of wine can have a much different effect on our emotions depending on where we're drinking. The researchers found that drinking at home was more likely to create a relaxing or tired feeling, but those who indulged in a few drinks while out were more likely to experience other emotions (like confidence, sexiness and aggression).

You should do less of this. ISTOCK

The information is important, researchers say, because people should have an understanding of how drinking makes them feel before choosing their drinks.

"From a public health perspective a lot of the time we have focused on issues around cancer, heart disease and liver disease — but an important aspect is the balance of emotional outcomes that people are getting from alcohol," Mark Bellis, co-author of the research from Public Health Wales NHS Trust, told the Guardian.

Hardly anyone is eating enough vegetables, new CDC report says

An apple a day keeps the doctor away, but most of us wouldn't know because we're not eating them.

Only 12 percent of Americans are eating the recommended number of fruits a day, according to a new study from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. The number of us eating enough vegetables is even worse at 9 percent.

"The study confirms years of data demonstrating that Americans do not eat their veggies," Marion Nestle, professor of nutrition and food studies at New York University, told the Guardian. "Assuming this result is close to reality, it suggests the need for taking much stronger action to make it easier and cheaper to eat fruits and vegetables."

CDC took data from the 2015 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Systems and broke it down into different categories — like state, race and gender — and found that some subgroups of people consume even fewer of the amount of produce a day.

The study, which broke out groups of Americans by state, class, race and gender, found some subgroups were even less likely to eat enough produce. More women eat enough fruit than men: 15.1 percent to 9.2 percent of women. The same goes for wealthy vs. low income: Only 7 percent of poor people eat enough vegetables, while 11.4 percent of wealthy people do.

Where we live is also a factor, with 2.2 percent of people living in South Dakota eat the recommended amount of veggies. Alaskans consume the most vegetables, but that number is still low at only 12 percent of all residents. MEAGAN MORRIS

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FBI gets warrant for Bob Brady's email as investigation deepens

Philly's longtime Democratic U.S. Representative Bob Brady and been under a cloud of suspicion for months since reports first broke of a February 2012 payment to coax a political rival into dropping out of the race.

Now new federal documents have come to light with new details about the investigation of Brady, who has chaired the local Democratic Party since 1986.

It was reported earlier this year that Brady in 2012 gave $90,000 in campaign funds to potential political rival and former municipal court judge Jimmie Moore, who in return agreed to drop out of the race for Brady's seat in Congress before the primary. (Moore has already pleaded guilty to his role in the alleged conspiracy.)

Congressman Bob Brady is the subject of an investigation. GETTY IMAGES

Brady has declined to comment on the case, although he recently told Daily News columnist Stu Bykofsky the charges were "total bull."

The latest documents, from a federal warrant, were posted on Twitter by a terrorism expert who later said he "stumbled" on them while searching federal court records online.

"A sitting member of Congress is being investigated by the FBI for false statements, conspiracy, and campaign fraud," Seamus Hughes wrote on Twitter. "They got a search warrant for his email and believe he's lying."

The documents indicate that the FBI is investigating Brady for the crimes mentioned by Hughes, and state that Brady's email, bobcongress@aol.com, "is likely to contain evidence of these crimes."

Two of Brady's former aides, Donald Jones, 62, and Kenneth Smukler, 57, were indicted in October on charges of making false statements to the Federal Election Commission. SAM NEWHOUSE

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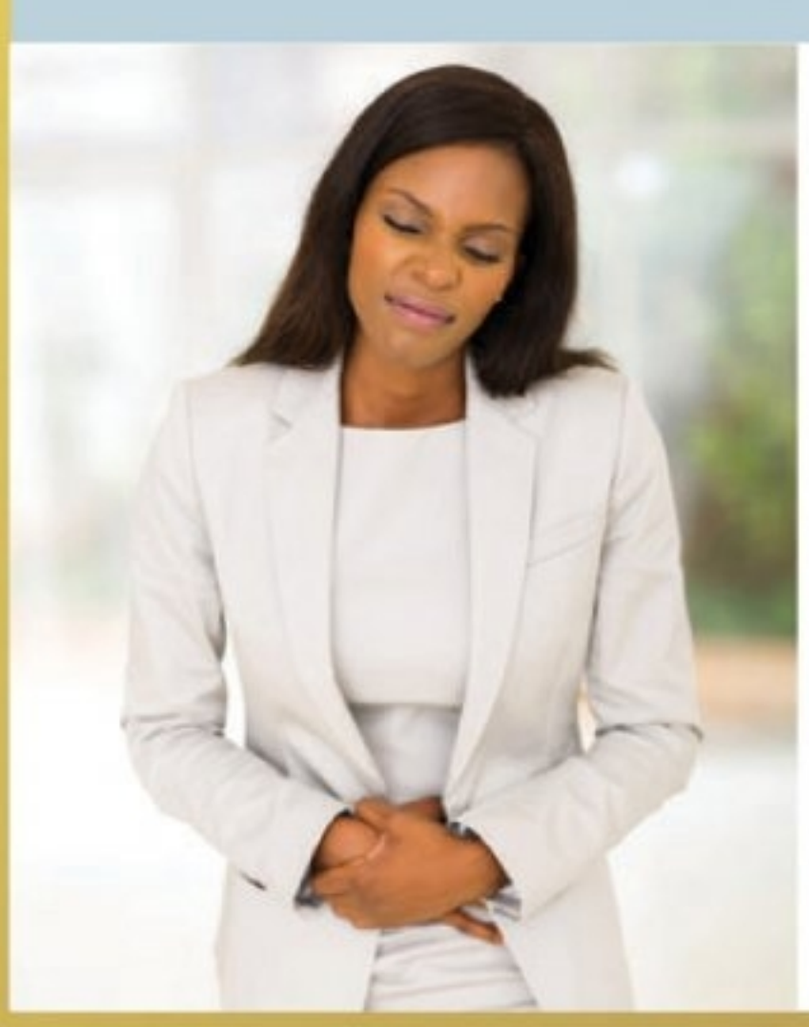

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Study participation is voluntary.

For more information please contact Eileen at 484-380-4861 or eileen.davies@ctcphiladelphia.com

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The Girl Scouts want to remind us: No one is owed a hug, even if they're family

Why the holidays can be a great way to teach children about consent.

MEAGAN MORRIS
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

As adults, we teach our children to avoid strangers and not let anyone touch them in their private areas. It's absolutely an important lesson to learn, but then we turn around and tell — or force — these same children to give physical affection to family and friends, even if they don't want to.

This sort of directive — like "give Aunt Shirley a hug!" — can be totally innocent, but advocates contend that it's giving children the wrong idea about what they allow others to do to their bodies.

The Girl Scouts are now reminding us about this mixed message in a recent blog post, adding that no one is "owed" a hug — not family, not anyone.

"Think of it this way, telling your child that she owes someone a hug either just because she hasn't seen this person in a while or because they gave her a gift can set the stage for her questioning whether she 'owes' another person any type of physical affection when they've bought her dinner or done something else seemingly nice for her later in life," the Girl Scouts writes in the post.

It's an important thing to be aware of, especially with all the recent attention on sexual harassment and assault in Hollywood and beyond. Children aren't too young to pick up on these cues, either.

"The notion of consent may seem very grown-up and like something that doesn't pertain to children," Girl Scouts' developmental psychologist Dr. Andrea Bastiani Archibald told the blog. "But the lessons girls learn when they're young about setting physical boundaries and expecting them to be respected last a lifetime, and can influence how she feels about herself and her body as she gets older."

And teaching children about consent, boundaries, and choices can possibly help them make better decisions about what they will — and won't — allow people to do.

"We know that some adults prey on children, and teaching your daughter about consent early on can help her understand her rights, know when lines are being crossed, and when to go to you for help."

The Girl Scouts adds that the upcoming holidays as an opportunity to teach your children that they can choose how to greet others, not the other way around.

Saying how much she's missed someone or thank you with a smile, a high-five, or even an air kiss are all ways she can express herself, and it's important that she knows she gets to choose which feels most comfortable to her.

The Girl Scouts organization is speaking out about forcing children to give physical affection to family and friends. GETTY IMAGES

PHILADELPHIA HOUSING AUTHORITY
MOVING TO WORK ANNUAL PLAN FISCAL YEAR 2019, PUBLIC HOUSING ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY AND HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) is requesting public comments and conducting a public hearing on the proposed Moving to Work Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2019 (Annual Plan) which includes Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program Significant Amendments for proposed transfer of assistance developments. PHA is a participant in the Moving to Work (MTW) Program pursuant to an MTW Agreement between PHA and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Annual Plan describes PHA's MTW proposed policy initiatives and activities for the period April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019. The comment period and public hearing will also provide the public with an opportunity to provide comments on proposed modifications to PHA's Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) and Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan (Administrative Plan).

The Annual Plan, ACOP and Administrative Plan are available for public review on PHA's website at www.pha.phila.gov under the "Latest News" section. The Annual Plan and a summary of proposed modifications to the ACOP and Administrative Plan may be picked up at the following locations:

Housing Choice Voucher Program Office:
2850 Germantown Ave 1st Floor

Scattered Sites Management Offices:
Abbottsford Homes – 3226 McMichael Street
Westpark Apartments – 4445 Holden Street
Spring Garden Apartments – 715 Brandywine Street
Wilson Park – 2500 Jackson Street
Fairhill Apartments – 2411 N.11th Street

Public Housing Management Offices:
Bartram - 5404 Gibson Drive
Raymond Rosen – 2110 N. 23rd Street

PHA residents, Housing Choice Voucher participants and the general public may provide oral comments by attending the public hearing described below and/or by submitting written comments during the comment period. A public hearing will be conducted at the following time and location:

Wednesday, November 29, 2017 at 10:00AM
12 South 23rd Street, 6th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103

The public comment period begins on November 10, 2017 at 12 noon and ends on December 11, 2017 at 12 noon. Comments must be received by the end of the comment period. Please send written comments to:

Philadelphia Housing Authority
Attention: MTW Annual Plan, ACOP and Administrative Plan Comments
12 South 23rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103

The public hearing is being held in an accessible location. If you require assistance, sign language interpreter or other accommodations, please call 215-684-5767. Please use the AT&T Relay Service for TTY.

PHA
PHILADELPHIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

TRUMP'S AMERICA

DEMOCRATIC HARASSERS, REPUBLICAN PERVERTS AND THE SELF-CONFESSED GROPER-IN-CHIEF

Sexual misconduct allegations have been leveled at former President George H.W. Bush. GETTY IMAGES

ANALYSIS

ELLIS HENICAN
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At last, we have found it: the final gasp of bipartisanship in Donald Trump's Washington.

Out-of-control horniness doesn't lean left, and it doesn't lean right. It springs from red states and from blue. Democratic harassers and Republican perverts march arm-in-arm together on a jam-packed walk of shame.

John Conyers is only the latest to be accused. On Sunday, the veteran Democratic congressman, age 88½, was pressured into stepping down as ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee. "I very much look forward to vindicating myself and my family," the mustachioed Michigander insisted as Nancy Pelosi bum-rushed him out of the oak-paneled committee room, and no one gave his denials any credence at all.

But Republicans had better not gloat. For every geezerly groper with a D by his name, there's one with an R. That's the balance of libido in Washington these days. Haven't the R's spent the past month explaining George H.W. Bush? Now 93, the wheelchair-bound ex-president has been on a multiyear, butt-squeezing tour across America, cracking one of the worst jokes that's ever told: "Do you know who my favorite magician is? David Cop-a-Feel."

Ugh! Is that Bush's senility talking? Could one of Conyers' famous backrubs calm everybody down? Maybe and no. But this much is for sure: From Washington to Hollywood and back again, they're lining up in pairs like nothing since Noah's Ark.

Roger Ailes and Harvey Weinstein.

Bill O'Reilly and Charlie Rose.

Al Franken and Joe Barton.

Kevin Spacey and Louis CK.

Sunday, you had to add Richard Branson. No doubt he'll have a partner by Tuesday.

Okay, Roy Moore still stands alone in his particular perversity. The Ten Commandments judge now running for the U.S. Senate in Alabama is the only grown man (so far) accused of dating teenage girls. But even in that stinky quarter, the finger-waggers had better beware. At this particular moment in her-story, no man stands alone for long.

Just ask Donald Trump. It seemed he'd gotten away with his "Access Hollywood" boasting, caught on Billy Bush's videotape. That was a year and a half ago. "When you're a star, they let you do it," he said. "You can do anything."

Metro columnist Ellis Henican is the best-selling author of a dozen books, including "TRUMPITUDE: The Secret Confessions of Donald's Brain," which hits stores tomorrow via Post Hill Press. trumpitude.us.

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Zimbabwe's Mugabe 'glowed' with relief after he quit: Priest

Robert Mugabe was Zimbabwe's leader for 37 years before resigning last week. GETTY IMAGES

Robert Mugabe looked relieved when he agreed to step down as Zimbabwe's president last week.

Father Fidelis Mukonori, a Jesuit priest who is a close friend of Robert Mugabe, laughed off a report by the privately owned Standard newspaper that Mugabe cried and lamented the betrayal by close lieutenants when he agreed to resign.

"When he finished his signature his face just glowed, no weeping unless there were angels weeping somewhere," Mukonori told Reuters after mass at the Chishawasha Catholic mission just outside the capital Harare.

"For me it was a sign that he was accepting that 'ah this is done' — he is relieved, not that he is aggrieved but relieved."

He said Mugabe realized it was the end of the road two days before he resigned, when he saw 60,000 Zimbabweans protesting and demanding he quit at the Harare grounds where he was inaugurated as prime minister in 1980.

His signed resignation letter was read out on Tuesday, as parliament heard a motion to impeach him.

Sources have told Reuters Mugabe was defiant when he met army top brass on Nov. 16 — which was the start of an extraordinary five-day standoff between Mugabe and Zimbabwe's supreme law on one side, and the military who had seized power, his party and Zimbabwe's people on the other.

The 93-year-old president finally accepted defeat only after he was sacked by his ZANU-PF party and faced the ignominy of impeachment.

Mugabe's fall after 37 years in power was spurred by a battle to succeed him that pitted his former deputy Emmerson Mnangagwa, who had stood by him for 52 years, and Mugabe's wife Grace, who is 52.

Mnangagwa was sworn in as president on Friday and all eyes now are on whether he will name a broad-based government or select figures from Mugabe's era.

Mukonori said Mugabe had wanted a gradual and smooth transition of power to Mnangagwa, whom he had fired as vice president two weeks ago, but this was thwarted after Mnangagwa failed to immediately return from exile in South Africa.

The Standard newspaper, which has been critical of Mugabe and his government over the years, urged Mnangagwa to "walk the talk on graft".

At his swearing in ceremony, Mnangagwa said he valued democracy, tolerance and the rule of law and would tackle corruption. He has also urged citizens not to undertake "vengeful retribution".

The new government is already moving to bring some of Mugabe and his wife's close associates to court. Former finance minister Ignatius Chombo faced magistrates on Saturday on corruption charges. He did not enter a plea.

Chombo was among several members of a group allied to Grace who were detained and expelled from the ZANU-PF after the military seized power in "Operation Restore Legacy" which it said was meant to remove the "criminals" around Mugabe.

Chombo, who told the court he was forcibly removed from his home on Nov. 15 by armed men in military uniform, was detained until Monday when his bail application will be heard. He was led away in leg irons together with ousted head of the ZANU-PF's influential youth league Kudzanai Chipanga. REUTERS

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Rep. Conyers steps down from committee while lawmakers probe harassment claims

Rep. John Conyers is stepping down from the House Judiciary Committee while lawmakers investigate allegations of sexual harassment against him.

Rep. John Conyers has denied the allegations against him. GETTY IMAGES

Rep. John Conyers, the oldest and longest serving member of Congress, said that while he denies the claims of sexual harassment, his continued presence during a congressional ethics review of the allegations was a distraction. "I cannot in good conscience allow these charges to undermine my colleagues in the Democratic Caucus, and my friends on both sides of the aisle in the Judiciary Committee," Conyers said.

The House of Representatives Ethics Committee said last week it was investigating allegations of sexual harassment against the Democratic congressman from Michigan, who said his office had resolved a harassment case with a payment but no admission of guilt.

The allegations against Conyers came to light as Congress reviews policies on how to handle sexual harassment complaints. They followed a string of such complaints against prominent figures in the U.S. media, Hollywood and politics.

"In this case, I expressly and vehemently denied the allegations made against me and continue to do so," said Conyers, who is one of America's most prominent black lawmakers.

House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi called for "zero tolerance" on sexual harassment in a statement released after Conyers' email. "We are at a watershed moment on this issue, and no matter how great an individual's legacy, it is not a license for harassment." REUTERS

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15 Celebrities that are *BFFs*

Stars, they're just like us — they flit from one best friend to the other. Sometimes, the attraction is obvious — looking at you, Tina Fey and Amy Poehler. And other times, it's less so. Who knew Jessica Biel and Jennifer Garner were tight?
In honor of these friendships, and so many others, we're celebrating exactly 16 celebrity friendships, from Leonardo DiCaprio and Tobey Maguire to Kate Hudson and Liv Tyler. **METRO**

ALL PHOTOS
GETTY IMAGES

Blake Lively & Florence Welch

Brad Pitt & George Clooney

Busy Philipps & Michelle Williams

Cameron Diaz & Drew Barrymore

Chrissy Teigen & Kim Kardashian

Eva Longoria & Victoria Beckham

Jessica Biel & Jennifer Garner

Kris Jenner & Melanie Griffith

Leonardo DiCaprio & Tobey Maguire

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Rashida Jones & Natalie Portman

Robert Pattinson & Katy Perry

Salma Hayek & Penelope Cruz

Tina Fey & Amy Poehler

Naomi Watts & Nicole Kidman

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'The Punisher' brings even more Marvel to Netflix

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GREGORY WAKEMAN
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"The Punisher" marks the sixth Netflix series to delve into the Marvel Cinematic Universe, following on from "Daredevil," "Jessica Jones," "Luke Cage," "Iron Fist" and "The Defenders" — so what keeps us coming back for more?

First and foremost, these shows are created by comic book nerds for larger audiences. From the Easter eggs left for mega-fans to super hero arks and tropes, the entertainment value works for everyone.

We spoke with "The Punisher" showrunner Steve Lightfoot to find out what the secret sauce is for his particular series.

When did you first come across "The Punisher"?

"In my teenage years. I remember the Dolph Lundgren movie from the '90s, and not necessarily knowing it was a comic book. I'd seen all the movies and read issues of the book from time to time. I didn't dive deep into it until I started on the show."

What makes "The Punisher" stand out from other comic book characters?

"It's always about character. The enduring appeal of comic books is that they have these great characters and that they're each really distinct. The thing that really hooked me into the show? I'd seen what they'd done with 'Daredevil' and 'Jessica Jones' and I thought what smart, character-first approaches! I just loved that."

"I was lucky enough to get a sneak peek at season two of 'Daredevil,' and I saw what Jon Bernthal (who plays lead Frank Castle in 'The Punisher') had done with the character. At that point that became my touchstone of what the show was about. It was about doing that version justice, because I loved what he had done. Immediately any version of the character that had been done before suddenly didn't matter."

What impressed you the most about Bernthal?

"Jon is a fantastic actor. He has a terrific physicality. You don't doubt that he could kick your ass. There's a real humanity and vulnerability there. He can go from fight scenes to breaking down in tears, and you forget about his physicality and feel for him. He has an amazing ability, even when he's doing really bad things — you still sympathize and emphasize with him. He lets you in. It's always costing his character more than anyone else. When you're a writer, that's always a gift."

Jon Bernthal as Frank Castle. NETFLIX

What's different about the writing process when dropping a series on Netflix?

"We treated it like a novel with 13 chapters. Hopefully people pick it up and watch all 13 chapters in one sitting. But if not, let's just make sure that each chapter ends in a place that people want to pick up the book again. The way these shows are made certainly allows that approach."

"The Punisher" is available now on Netflix.

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NerdWallet's 2017 consumer holiday

Some holiday shopping spending advice from our friends at NerdWallet.

NerdWallet is a personal finance website.

American holiday shoppers typically plan their buying a few months in advance. But even that preparation hasn't prevented a lump of debt from arriving at the end of the year.

According to NerdWallet's second Consumer Holiday Shopping Report, most American holiday shoppers plan their shopping ahead of time, but many put off making purchases until after the bargain-rich period spanning Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and Cyber Monday — and their wallets may suffer the consequences.

The report analyzes spending behavior and trends among millennials (ages 18-34), Gen Xers (35-54) and baby boomers (55 and older), and is based on a survey of more than 2,000 U.S. adults 18 and older commissioned by NerdWallet and conducted online by Harris Poll in October 2017. The report found that despite their good intentions, a higher percentage of Americans who shopped during the 2016 holiday season incurred debt than those who shopped during the 2015 holiday season.

NerdWallet found that spending is expected to stay flat: Americans who will purchase holiday gifts during the 2017 holiday season plan to spend $660 on average, about the same as in 2016 ($657), and 60 percent of those who plan to purchase gifts in 2017 say they will spend the same as last year. More Americans are finding themselves in debt as a result of holiday gift purchases: 56 percent of those who shopped during the 2016 holiday season incurred credit card debt versus 48 percent of those who shopped during the 2015 holiday season. Baby boomers who plan to shop this holiday season plan to spend the most: They estimate their spending at $802 on average. Millennials and Gen Xers follow at $434 and $679, respectively. Budgets are often overlooked: More than a quarter of Americans (27 percent) who shopped during the 2016 holiday season did not have a budget, and 24 percent went over budget. Americans prepare for months: On average,

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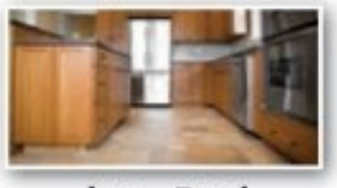

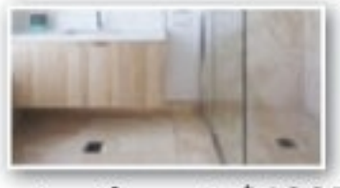

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shopping report

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holiday shoppers typically start to plan their shopping 2½ months in advance. But they may be missing out on some of the shopping season's best sales: 47 percent of those who plan to purchase gifts say they'll do the majority of their shopping between Nov. 28 and Dec. 23, not on Thanksgiving, Black Friday or Cyber Monday. Most intend to mimic 2016 spending.

An overwhelming majority of shoppers (85%) plan to purchase gifts for friends and loved ones between now and the end of 2017, and when it comes to spending money, most don't intend to deviate from last year — 60 percent of those who plan to purchase gifts during the 2017 holiday season say they will spend the same amount as they did in 2016 (anticipated spending of $660 on average this year versus $657 last holiday season).

Within that group, baby boomers plan to spend the most money on average at $802, which is 85 percent more than millennials ($434) and 18 percent more than Gen Xers ($679).

Millennials are far more likely (34%) to say they will spend more this year than last year compared with Gen Xers (15 percent) or baby boomers (13 percent). Still, as in 2016, millennials who plan on purchasing gifts in 2017 were more inclined to say they will spend less than $500 (63 percent), while 45 percent of Gen Xers and 46 percent of baby boomers said the same.

For more, make sure to check out the check out the full report over at NerdWallet.com.

LAUREN SCHWAHN

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Cyber Monday: Make some coffee and surf for online deals. ALL PHOTOS ISTOCK

How to shop for Cyber Monday

Experts share tips on how to take advantage of Cyber Monday deals, the savings day that often takes a backseat to Black Friday madness.

KATE MOONEY
@yatinbrooklyn
kate.mooney@metro.us

After the chaos of Thanksgiving and Black Friday, it's easy to forget about Cyber Monday. The annual day of online-only deals, which falls on the Monday after Thanksgiving, is much more low-key than Black Friday, mainly because you can do everything from your couch or desk. We asked experts how to best take advantage of the savings.

Best shopping categories

Cyber Monday still provides plenty of opportunities to save a buck, especially when it comes to "softer goods" categories such as beauty, travel and apparel, says Lindsay Sakraida, director of content marketing at Deal News.

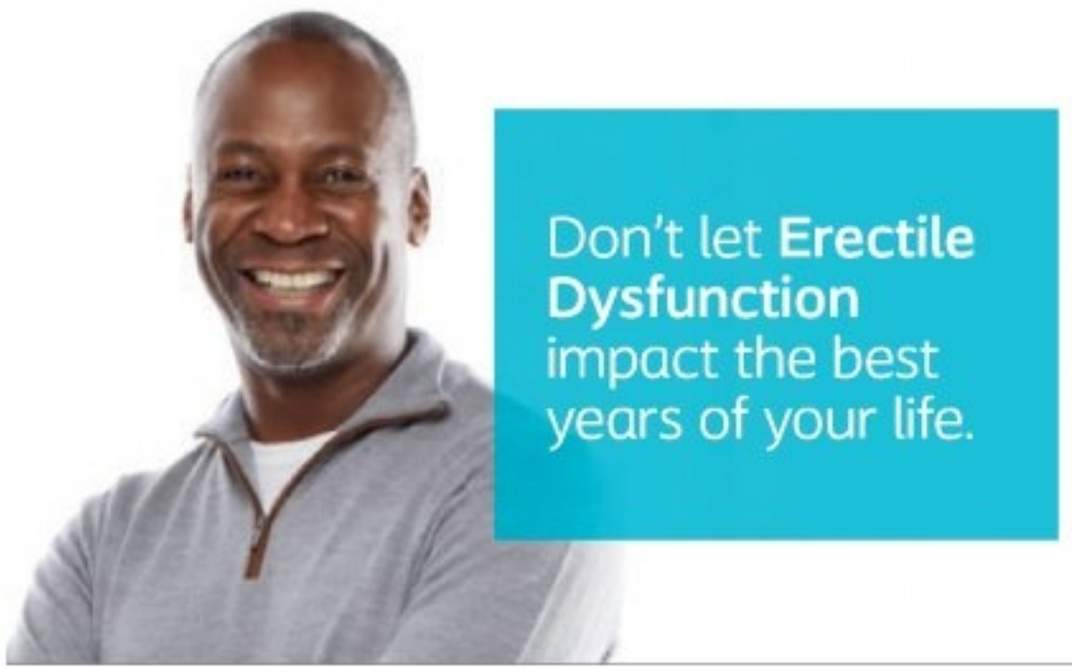
If you're still in the market for a winter coat or boots, haven't bought a ticket home for the holidays or are planning a late winter getaway, Monday could be a good day pull the trigger on these purchases. Sakraida notes that clothing brands tend to issue sitewide sales of up to 40 or 50 percent off.

When it comes to travel deals, hotels.com offers tons of discounted packages, and budget airlines like JetBlue and Southwest, or internationally, Norwegian and WOW Air, have been known to offer discounted flights on the holiday.

Strategies for deal hunters

While brands put out their Black Friday ads well in advance, Cyber Monday deals are more last minute. Instead, your best bet is to follow your favorite brands on social media and sign up for their email newsletters to hear about the deals as they're announced.

"There may be a special promotion for subscribers and the coupon code will be



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tied to specific email accounts," explains Sakraida.

Another difference is while some Black Friday deals prioritize the early bird, Cyber Monday deals don't really sell out — with the exception of airfare — so you can do your shopping any time on Monday when it's convenient for you.

Price checking is an essential money-saving technique, says Sara Skirboll, shopping and trends expert at coupon website RetailMeNot. She suggests using price comparison tools like Google Shopping or Nextag, which will point out the lowest price of an item online so you find the absolute best deal.

Shipping and returns

Be sure to note whether or not the company offers free shipping. If it doesn't, but the brand has a brick-and-mortar location, you might be able to pick up your items in store to save on shipping costs, Skirboll suggests.

Same goes for returns. "Opt to shop with a retailer who has a physical location nearby so you can return any merchandise you don't like in person to dodge return fees," says money-saving expert Andrea Woroch.

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A Philly fitness guru schools us on burning those holiday calories

Eat too much pie? Not a problem.

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Now that the holidays are here, high-calorie goodies are everywhere and even the most disciplined among us can't (and shouldn't) resist a little indulgence.

"You will eat a cookie. You will definitely eat a slice of pie. And no one ever says no to a hot toddy," says full-time fitness instructor Kate DeGennaro. "With hectic schedules and holiday parties, plan your sweaty pursuits in advance."

No matter how crazy your life is, there's always a way to make time for fitness.

"Every Sunday make a fitness plan," she says. "Whether it's signing up for a workout or meeting a friend, creating a routine will help alleviate any schedule stress and eliminate any 'I shouldn't have had that snowman cookie' feelings."

So if you're looking to turbo-blast those extra holiday calories, DeGennaro gives us the lowdown on how to do it.

"Around the holidays, everyone wants to burn calories so they don't feel guilty about indulging a little," she says. "Be it running, cycling, power yoga, or Pilates, figuring out what method burns calories at the highest rate and in the shortest amount of time is a constant struggle."

As a fitness professional, DeGennaro doesn't get a whole lot of time to workout on her own, because she's busy helping her clients.

"When I get an hour or so a day to spend on myself, I use it wisely at high intensity, effective and targeting workouts."

Her first pick is SLT (Megaformer), where you burn 400 to 500 calories in 50 minutes.

"SLT creates constant low-impact tension between the machine, gravity, and the client all while stabilizing the spine and strengthening the core," she says.

Miss riding your bike as the weather gets colder? She suggests giving Indoor Cycling a try at a studio like Soul Cycle where you can burn 500 to 700 calories in 45 minutes. You can also look for HIIT (high-intensity interval training) classes where you can expect to burn 300 calories in 30 minutes.

So there's no need to deprive yourself of those holiday goodies — as long as you keep that body moving!

Kate DeGennaro wants you to enjoy that snowman cookie.

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ISTOCK.

While many of us will be enjoying some sort of delicious spread this holiday season, we should never forget that many families struggle to put food on the table every day of the year. It's a harsh reality, and the effects of this economic divide can be closely seen with how children from these families are performing in schools. This year's Scholastic Teachers and Principals School Report came to the startling conclusion that "71 percent of New York state teachers report having students in their classrooms who are coming to school hungry" and have been reporting similar statistics across the country.

Furthermore, Orgul Ozturk, an economist at the University of South Carolina (with help from her colleagues, Chad Cotti, and John Gordanier) found that the effects of malnourishment for these children can put them in severe disadvantages. In an interview with NPR back in September, she explained that children who come from families that are stuck waiting on their monthly food stamps to refill are less likely to perform well on important exams.

On top of these horrifying statistics, Scholastic had also found that 90 percent of teachers have noticed that their children arrive at school suffering some sort of personal crisis. These issues at home can lead to missing meals and result in distractions at school. "You have so many families with children that are coming to school and their parents may be divorced or separated or they may be living with a different family member," says Michael Haggen, the chief academic officer at Scholastic, "there are so many things that they have to deal with and then come to school, it affects how they are receiving information."

Many schools are taking on this problem by offering free or reduced-cost breakfast and lunch programs. But while this is a step in the right direction, Haggen believes that schools should be doing more to help. Since some children come to school hungry from the night before, Haggen thinks that schools should offer three or four meals a day in order to make sure these children get the right amount of food every day no matter what their situation is like at home.

But how can faculty spot children who may not be getting enough food before and after school? Scholastic is now offering a program called "Learning Support" to help teachers pick up on the warning signs that their students are struggling in class due to hunger. "Oftentimes teachers may not be aware of what their students are facing when they come to them. So their assumptions can be something else," explains Haggen. "What we do at Scholastic with 'Learning Support' is we teach them what to look for and what those signs are, then how do we work with agencies to support them."

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3 Things we saw as Bears fall victim to 10-win Eagles

Here's what we saw as the Eagles thoroughly dominated the Bears on Sunday.

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Carson Wentz and company continued their dominant run in Week 12. GETTY IMAGES

What did you expect?

The Eagles ran for 176 yards, Carson Wentz threw for three touchdowns and the Philly defense held its second straight opponent out of the end zone in Sunday afternoon's 31-3 win over the Bears, lifting the Birds to 10-1 on the year. They're week away from clinching a division title.

Here are three things we learned:

Keeping drives alive

On their second drive, a successful fourth-and-1 run by Jay Ajayi led to a third and nine completion to Alshon Jeffery and eventually a 17-yard Carson Wentz to Zach Ertz touchdown pass. Ertz would catch 10 passes for 103 yards and become Philly's first 100-yard receiver on the year.

In one of his common works of magic Wentz scrambled for 16 yards on third-and-9 later in the second. The scamper set up a 15-yard screen pass for a touchdown to Nelson Agholor and a 14-0 lead. The Birds went for it a second time in the first half, a Wentz lunge propelling the Eagles down the field and — after yet another third down scrambling first — he found Jeffery for a touchdown. Philly led 24-0 at the half.

As the ball turns

Malcolm Jenkins had an interception Sunday but coughed the ball up to the Bears on the return, evening out the turnover ratio in the early going. The differential didn't take long to tilt in Chicago's favor after a 35-yard LeGarrette Blount sprint resulted in Adrian Amos forcing a fumble, recovered by Sam Acho. The mistake didn't cost Philly though, as Cairo Santos missed a field goal try. It wouldn't be the first time Blount would fumble, as Chicago recovered a loose ball late in the fourth.

A near turnover was forced by Brandon Graham, who strip sacked Mitchell Trubisky before the Bears recovered the loose ball.

Another near turnover followed Jay Ajayi as he sprinted for the end zone 30 yards in the fourth, fumbling the ball forward at the five yard line. The ball was recovered in the end zone by Agholor for a touchdown and a 31-3 lead. Corey Graham's late-game interception — and 58-yard return slammed the door on Chicago's best scoring try.

Demolishing defense

No one expected the Bears offense to do much against Philly's stout defense, but sporting the No. 5 rushing offense in the NFL, led by Jordan Howard, most expected a tougher battle up front. Instead, the Eagles held Chicago to negative-5 yards on the ground on 14 tries.

The Bears didn't get their first first down of the game until a minute had passed in the third quarter. Prior to that, Philadelphia had forced six punts in a row and held Chicago to just 33 total yards of offense.

In all, complete domination characterized a defensive unit that was able to overcome 70 penalty yards and help the Eagles offense stay on the field for 38:22 minutes.

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Eagles can't lose Jeffery

The Eagles need to make it a top priority to bring Jeffery back. GETTY IMAGES

Alshon Jeffery bet on himself last offseason when he inked a one-year, $9.5 million contract with the Eagles. He is going to win the bet.

Though his numbers might not turn heads on paper though 12 weeks, his seven touchdowns and 43 catches for 619 yards are about as good as the Eagles were hoping for when they added him to help Carson Wentz take a leap to the next level.

"First of all, he's unselfish," Wentz said of Jeffery recently. "Second of all, even on the weeks he's not getting the ball, he's drawing attention, drawing the best corner and clouding safeties. With Alshon and Jay [Ajayi] now, and the way we can spread the ball around, I think that will make us even more dynamic moving forward."

When Jeffery is not flashing his incredible "pass radius" or impressive hands, he is helping other Philly pass-catching threats get open.

If the Eagles want to continue their success from 2017 well into the future as a regular Super Bowl contender they will need to convince Jeffery to come back.

Though they are making strides, Nelson Agholor and Mack Hollins aren't ready to play the role of WR1 on a Super Bowl team. And Torrey Smith looks likely to be back in the free agent pool when the Birds decide what to do about his team-option.

The other options next spring won't offer an upgrade for Jeffery.

Jeffery rises well above the level of the rest of his upcoming wide receiver free agent class and if he hits the open market could command a huge contract from a team in need.

The Eagles have the advantage of being able to negotiate before the NFL New Year starts next March and if they are smart, they'll use that window to lock down Jeffery, 27, for a three or four year term.

They really have no choice — Wentz needs weapons and after a year of bonding with Jeffery on and off the field, he's a key cog in the Eagles trek for a world championship.

"Just staying in the moment," Jeffery said of how to maintain his success working with Wentz. "Just keep working. Just stay focused. Just staying on top. This is the brotherhood. Just keeping everyone on track."

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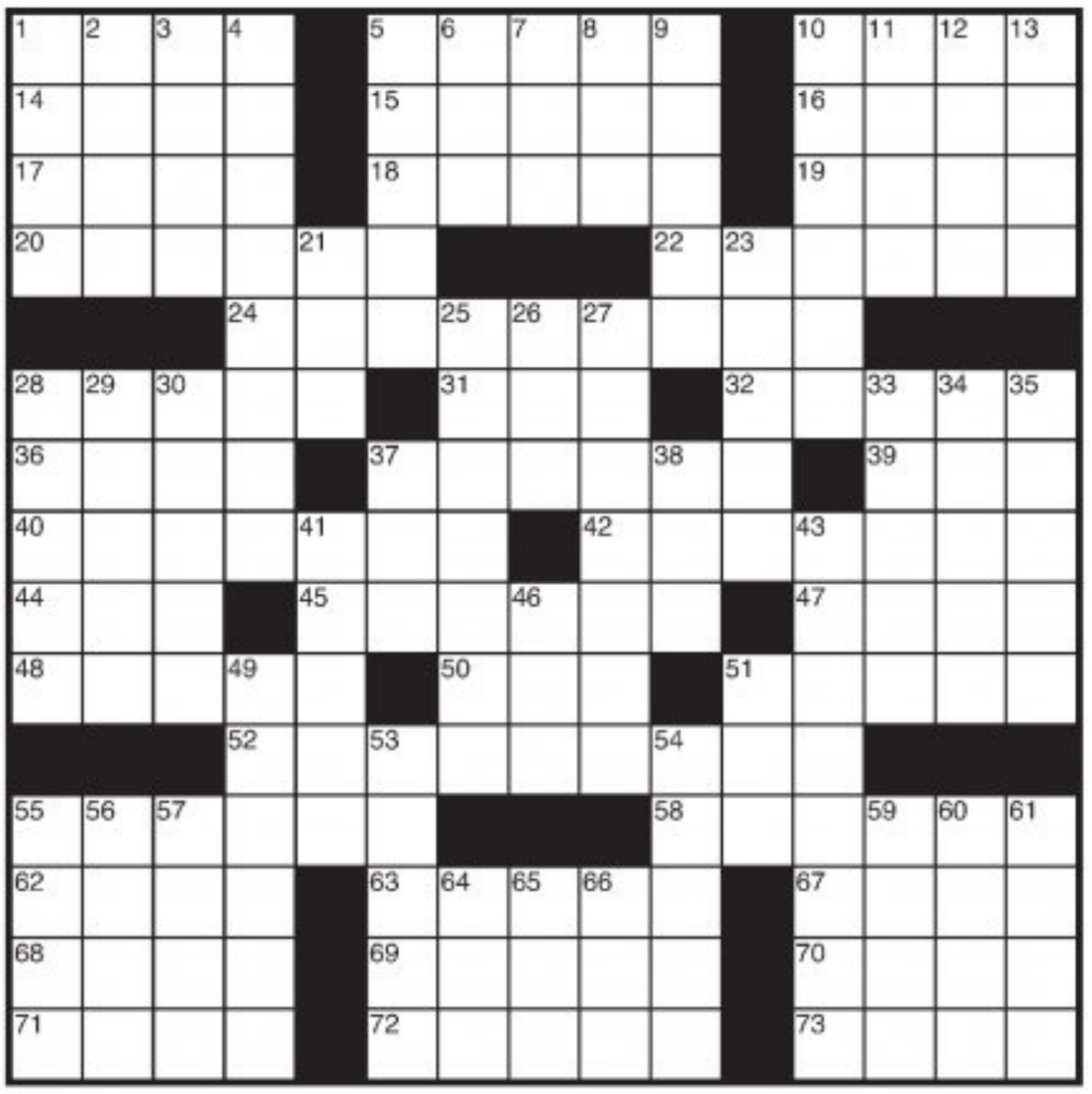
5 Leathery
10 Sleeve part
14 Pointed arch
15 Kashmir cash
16 Peace Prize city
17 Sp. or Ger.
18 "I don't mind -- --"
19 Spinks of the ring
20 Romp about
22 Sidestepped
24 Raised to a lofty position
28 Partner of alas
31 -- Wiedersehen
32 Oven shelves
36 Attic
37 "Instant" house
39 Disdainful snort
40 Crowed over
42 Nylons
44 -- Nimitz
45 Critter
47 Sit-down occasion
48 Taxi ticker
50 Years on end
51 Fuel-gauge reading
52 Paris landmark (2 wds.)
55 Shortage
58 Leap over
62 Movie lioness
63 Suffuse
67 Go yachting
68 Show approval
69 Persona non --
70 Ms. James of jazz
71 Where Canterbury is
72 Rented, as a limo
73 Caught red-handed

Down
1 Dog's ancestor
2 Seaweed extract
3 Town near Lake Tahoe
4 Lets slide
5 Stretch of land
6 Umpire's yell
7 Work -- -- sweat
8 Hair goo
9 Most beautiful woman
10 Pina --
11 Pre-owned
12 Freighter hazard
13 Cherished
21 Printer fluid
23 Is and was
25 More robust
26 Strong-scented plant
27 Casual
28 Book for photos
29 Unfastened
30 Make -- -- buck
33 Bird sound
34 K, to a jeweler
35 Bashfully
37 Not a pencil
38 Email provider
41 Mystical card
43 Dunks
46 Stooge with bangs
49 Starry-eyed
51 Low-fat meat
53 Chicken piece
54 In the lead
55 Patio cousin
56 She, to Marie
57 Cold -- -- icicle
59 See regularly
60 Diet
61 High spirits
64 CAT scan relative
65 Tavern
66 Sporty truck



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easy

			2		7			3
5		6	3					
9		2		8				
	4		9	3	1		8	
		3		4		1		
	1		8	7	6		4	
				6		8		9
					9	6		4
6			4		8			

hard

4		6				2		3
			4					
2			3	8				7
		2		3	1		5	
6	3						2	8
	9		8	2		3		
1				7	3			6
					8			
7		5				4		2

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Keep your personal life a secret. Sharing information with the wrong person or using your password or bank cards liberally will lead to loss.

Taurus Use your imagination to find solutions when dealing with partners and superiors. Knowing where you stand will help you make the right decision.

Gemini Truth is better than fiction. You can use your imagination, but don't let your words hurt someone or be subject to ridicule. Fair and intelligent assessment is encouraged.

Cancer If you offer a little extra, you will stand out. Your creativity when finding solutions and ways to improve old methods will encourage you to do more.

Leo You'll have great ideas and wisdom to share, but choose your collaborators carefully. Emotional manipulation will be used to take something that belongs to you.

Virgo Don't be fooled by what others do or say. Someone will use emotional blackmail to try to get you to do something that is not your responsibility.

Libra Step up and make a decision. Put your qualifications to the test and give your all to bring about positive change. Learn from the past and jump into action.

Scorpio Take on a new project. Enjoy creative endeavors and do things with youngsters or a loved one that will bring you closer together. Self-improvements are highlighted.

Sagittarius Don't share personal information. Be cautious about who you trust and what you offer. You'll be taken advantage of if you cannot say no to an unreasonable demand.

Capricorn Deal with personal finances and evaluate the way you currently handle your cash. Time spent with youngsters or loved one will lead to an interesting suggestion.

Aquarius Use your sense of right and wrong when dealing with people who want to entice you into doing something you probably shouldn't do.

Pisces You'll be disillusioned by what someone tells you. Look at your personal affairs to discover an opportunity that will benefit you physically or emotionally. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

S	W	A	N	■	■	D	A	L	I	■	T	W	I	N
H	A	L	O	S	■	E	R	A	T	■	O	R	C	A
A	D	M	I	T	■	F	I	C	A	■	M	E	I	N
D	I	S	R	O	B	E	D	■	L	E	S	S	E	N
■	■	■	■	C	A	R	■	W	I	N	■	T	R	Y
A	L	A	S	K	A	■	T	O	A	D	S	■	■	■
C	U	S	H	Y	■	I	R	O	N	S	I	D	E	■
E	A	S	E	■	V	O	I	D	S	■	T	U	E	S
■	U	N	E	V	E	N	L	Y	■	L	A	D	L	E
■	■	■	P	E	R	I	L	■	P	U	R	E	S	T
E	T	A	■	E	S	C	■	M	I	R	■	■	■	■
P	A	P	Y	R	I	■	Y	O	G	I	B	E	A	R
O	B	I	E	■	O	P	E	N	■	N	E	R	V	E
C	O	N	N	■	N	I	L	E	■	G	A	M	E	S
H	O	G	S	■	S	E	P	T	■	■	T	A	C	T

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